



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY R. MURPHY
SECRETARY

PAUL J. COTE, JR.
COMMISSIONER

October 11, 2005

Re: Potential Shortage of Hydrofluosilicic Acid

Dear Municipal Health Official:

As many of you are aware there is a potential nationwide shortage of hydrofluosilicic acid, commonly known as "silly acid". The Office of Oral Health understands that your town is using this product to fluoridate its community water supply.

According to information the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has received, the reasons for the potential shortage include the closure of a provider of raw fluoride material and the increased use of this product. The remaining producers do not at the present time have sufficient fluoride recovery capacity in place to replace the lost production and increased need.

The MDPH, Office of Oral Health has identified some possible alternative sources of hydrofluosilicic acid that are provided in attachment A. In addition the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) also provides a list of suppliers on its website: <http://www.nst.com/certified/pnschemicals/>.

We understand that you may wish to inform your residents if fluoridation is interrupted. When informing residents, you should inform your customers with children to consult with their pediatrician and/or dentist to assess the need for fluoride supplements.

The Office of Oral Health is responsible for reporting to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) each town's fluoride levels. Therefore, if your town does have to interrupt community water fluoridation due to a shortage of available product, we request that you send official notice of the interruption to both the Office of Oral Health and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), notifying us of the date of interruption and how long you anticipate the interruption will last. Then notify us again once fluoridation has resumed.

If you should have any questions concerning the hydrofluosilicic acid shortage or how your town should respond, please contact the Office of Oral Health.

Sincerely,

Lynn A. Bethel, RDH, BSDH, MPH
Office of Oral Health
617-624-5940 or 617-624-6074 lynn.bethel@state.ma.us

cc: Ms. Yvette Depeiza- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Elaine T. Krueger- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Toxicology